

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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SUBJECT: NEW FOREIGN MINISTER COMMENTS ON HIS POLICIES

1. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH EL NACIONAL PUBLISHED JANUARY 24
VENEZUELA'S NEW FOREIGN MINISTER, DR. RAMON ESCOVAR SALOM,
COMMENTED ON HIS NEW JOB AS FOLLOWS:

(A) ALL SECTORS OF PUBLIC OPINION WILL BE CONSULTED IN ADVANCE IN
FORMULATING VENEZUELA'S PUBLIC INTERNATIONAL OPINIONS.

(B) HE WILL DEMAND "SEVERE DISCIPLINE AND EFFICIENCY" IN THE
FOREIGN MINISTRY. "JOINING THE FOREIGN MINISTRY IS NOT AN
OPPORTUNITY FOR A COMFORTABLE VACATION."

(C) HE WILL MEET WITH THE PRESS WITH PLEASURE "BUT I WILL KEEP
SILENT RATHER THAN MAKE UNSUITABLE STATEMENTS." "DIPLOMACY IS A
SERIOUS BUSINESS AND POLICY IS NOT THE SAME THING AS VERBAL
EXPANSIVENESS."

(D) ESCOVAR SAID HE WOULD CONTINUE THE DIRECTION WHICH VENEZUELA'S
FOREIGN POLICY TOOK UNDER FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER SCHACHT "MARKED
OUT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC." HE INSISTS THAT THE FOREIGN
POLICY WHICH HE WILL CARRY OUT "UNDER THE INSPIRATION OF THE CHIEF
OF STATE, BE COHERENT AND SOLID." ESCOVAR CHARACTERIZED THE GOV
AS ONE OF "AN OPENING TOWARD LATIN AMERICA AND TOWARD
ANY COUNTRY, WHATEVER ITS FORM OF GOVERNMENT."

(E) ESCOVAR ALSO SAID HE PLANNED TO PARTICIPATE IN NEXT WEEK'S
BOSTON SEMINAR.

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2. COMMENT: DR. RAMON ESCOVAR SALOM IS AN INTELLIGENT, HARD-
WORKING, CAPABLE AND AMBITIOUS PUBLIC OFFICIAL WHO WILL DOUBTLESS
DEMAND MORE FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND VENEZUELA'S FOREIGN
SERVICE THAN DID HIS PREDECESSOR. IT IS ALSO A GOOD AUGURY THAT
ESCOVAR INTENDS TO WEIGH HIS WORDS WITH THE PRESS, AN ENVIABLE
RESOLUTION FOR A NEW VENEZUELAN FOREIGN MINISTER.
MCCLINTOCK

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